

9-13-10

Neil R. Bailey
2203 Margaret St.
Messaula Mont.
59801

Dear People,

I am writing this letter for A.ianne Bailey, as she is not able to write very well since her stroke in 2003. She has suffered many problems from diabetes, the loss of her right eye, partial blindness in her left and in 03 a stroke that left her left arm and leg paralyzed. She needs someone to transfer her from bed to a wheel chair and from chair to toilet so she needs 24-7 care with the program we are on with Personal Care attendants. I am able to work part time so as to meet our bills and necessary costs to live a simple life.

Please do not take away what helps us to get by. Please do not complicate our lives more. What else can we say.

Neil R Bailey

for A.ianne Bailey

Dear Legislative Finance Committee,

09/13/2010

Please do not do away with these programs.

If it wasn't for the people that have helped me out, I would not have gotten the things I need. It cost a lot of money to live in those facilities and I can not afford to live in any of them, I will not live in a nursing home nor a institution what so ever. I will live and die in my own home, that is my right as a human being on this earth. By the grace of God. My income is very slim to nothing. I can't afford to lose everything, let alone the services that are provided for me. These services have been a blessing for me. I'm sure for others just as well. What would we do without these services. A lot of us would be extremely upset and stressed out and it would take a toll on a lot of us that needs these services. These cuts will affect many, many disabled people. So please think before you sign. Think of all the people that are disabled and their needs. It's not only in Montana, it's all over the United States of America. If you have never been in our shoes, then you don't know what it's like to suffer on a daily bases. But you know someone that needs these services

maybe a family member, a friend, a child. It will
effect them greatly, more than you can imagine.
I would be nowhere without these services.
So please understand where we're coming from
here. We're just like you, a human being,
just a little different that's all.

Sincerely,
Sharon ~~Byers~~

I feel they should not act
medicaid - Home & Community Base
Services - I have been in assisted
living for 2 1/2 yrs - I + has kept
me out of the hospital and mainly
off the streets - Home & Community
Base Services is a great asset to many
many people and is a very helpful and
supportive program.

Jeanne Galles
1-17-10

4718 23rd Ave

Wichita, KS 67217

10/4/10 23 yrs.

My name is Jesse Crawford, I was in a ~~traumatic~~ serious car crash in 2008. Because of that car crash, I sustained a brain injury. I did not realize how serious my injury was, until I was enrolled into a program, that specializes in brain injuries. Until my occupational therapists started showing me, the stuff that I was having trouble with, I didn't really know how much help I needed. But with the help of others, not only do I know how serious my injury was, but I'm getting help for it.

~~If you cut~~

By cutting these programs, there will be a lot of people who ~~will be~~ won't be as fortunate as I was. Trust me without help, I don't know where I would be at this stage in my healing.

The main thing that kept my head up about about my situation, ^{was} ~~is~~ the programs that were available to me.

By cutting these programs there will be a lot of unfortunate people without the proper help they need. So please allow these programs to remain in our communities.

Sincerely Jesse Crawford

9-15-10

I am very upset about this whole situation about the proposed cuts in Medicaid & possibility of cutting Health and Human service. I've been living in Assisted Living for over 2 yrs. I'm doing quite well. If you cut the budget - I may be homeless or go into a deep depression and possibly end up at the madhouse - Along with many other consumers. This scares me very much and I'm so afraid I'm going to lose everything - "Please look at other ways to change the budget"

Jeanne Gilbert

RE: Possible changes to medicaid

This situation has me very upset. I feel that the only people that understand the dynamics of this are the people that need the medicaid as it is. Changes are only going to cost the state more money than ever. I am sure the majority of the people do not cost Medicaid a month what it would cost if we had to go into a nursing home. I have a nurse that comes in once a week and a person that comes in to clean once a week. I also have a caregiver through Express for 24.5 hours a week. If the cost would also cover my medications then I feel it would be much more costly than keeping it as is. I only use one pharmacist so they know if a doctor writes a prescription that will not work with the medicines I am already taking.

I also believe more nursing homes would have to be built and then manned. The people that I have come into my house would be without a job. They would no doubt have their wages cut so they just more than likely need to find another job and you well know, finding a job is right next to impossible. Changes would cause a snow ball effect. The nursing home would cost a minimum of \$3,000 a month. That would be like comparing a very expensive restaurant to MacDonalds.

My home is already handicap accessible. Changes have been made for me. I would not want to go into a nursing home. This is my home and it is totally paid for. I do not want to leave it. In fact if I were to leave my home there is no doubt I would become more depressed than I already am. I am still in control of my life and I want it to stay that way. I still have a sound mind even if the body isn't working all that well. I am going on 67 years old not 100 years old.

I want to keep the doctors I already have. I want to have the choice of St. Patrick's or Community Hospitals. I want to keep my pharmacy. I want to keep my nurse and housekeeper and I want to keep my caregiver. I have an excellent group of people caring for me. I have faith in them but don't feel I would feel the same if put in a home.

Please think about this in a practical way. Go out and talk with those of us that utilize medicade and keep an open mind. If this would be thought over sensibly you would realize the way it is now is the best way not only for the state but also for the people who need medicaid.

Thank you for taking my letter for consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenna Dreese".

Glenna Dreese
273 Tie Chute Lane
Florence, MT 59833
406-273-0473

Legislative Finance Committee

10/03/10

As you struggle with budget matters, please know this:

The benefits I receive through HCBS and the State Plan allow me to maintain my independence and live in my own home. Without these services I would be relegated to a nursing home, at a far greater cost to the State.

I am accorded 35 hours a week of Personal Assistance Services (PAS). I have Homemaker assistance, Hab Aide services, and Physical Therapy twice a week. With these services I am able to live well, and independently. I have assistance with bathing, dressing and meal prep. I am taken out shopping for both groceries as well as other household items. I get assistance with housekeeping chores such as laundry and cleaning. I am able to access some recreational activities such as cultural enrichment at various museums, and Out to Lunch at Caras Park. These outings contribute to my community social involvement.

I know you are entertaining making cuts to so-called "optional Medicaid services" to include Physical Therapy, dental care and even eyeglasses. There is no way I could self-pay for any of these optional services. Without dentures, I couldn't eat and my health would be compromised as a result.

I encourage you to be pro-active by taking a preventive care approach. Routine health care screenings go a long way to reducing catastrophic health issues.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nancy Davenport". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Nancy Davenport

Missoula, MT

October 4, 2010

Legislative Finance Committee
Helena Montana

RE: Proposed Cuts to Health and Human Service Programs

Dear Legislature,

I am writing because it has come to my attention that there are proposed cuts to HHS programs that will affect my son. My son, Cale, is 4 years old and suffers from an undiagnosed developmental delay. As of this writing, he is behind on all of his milestones but continues to make progress. The Home and Community Based Services program has been a lifesaver for our family.

Home and Community Based Services makes it possible for my son to live at home with us and contribute to our family and the lives of all of our friends. HCBS helps arrange many aspects of Cale's care, preventing him being placed in an expensive institution like a nursing home.

Thank you for considering Cale and all the others like him who are contributing to the lives of those around them when you make the difficult decision that will face you as a legislature.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Alex Burkhalter', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alex Burkhalter
5014 Elk Hills Ct
Missoula MT 59803
Tel 406 728 2724

September 30, 2010

Dear Legislative Finance Committee:

My name is Cy Ann Bailey and I am 100% disabled from a head injury that I received in 1982, courtesy of a drunk driver. It has taken me all these years to regain a fraction of my original capabilities.

You might not know this, but an injury such as mine must be worked on constantly to provide even the most simple of functions, such as walking and toileting myself. If the services I receive were to be cut back, I would most certainly lose a good portion of my independence and might even revert to being bed-ridden in a nursing home or care facility.

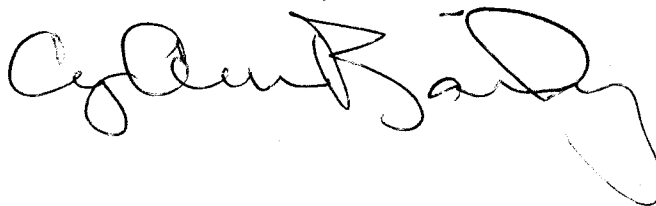
The doctors told my family they should just put me in a home after I awoke from the coma caused by the brain injury. They said I was never to walk, talk or think again. But I had a two year old daughter at the time and wasn't having any of that. My daughter is 30 years old last may, has a good job and will graduate college next year with two degrees in business.

I have worked very, very hard to get to this point and believe that any reduction in my assistance would affect me in a direct and bad way. My caregiver already has so much responsibility for me, including many functions that he isn't even paid for which he performs out of the goodness of his heart. To reduce his hours would directly reduce his earnings. And in the current economy, we need people working more, not less.

Not to mention those services upon which I rely so much, such as my dental benefits. I was diagnosed a few years ago with Primary Thrombocytosis, a condition which causes over production of platelets in my blood stream and subsequently a heart attack before it was discovered. I was prescribed chemo-therapy drugs to treat this condition. One major side-effect of the chemo drug is that it attacks the enamel and strength of my teeth. Without my dental benefits, I would have almost no teeth left, as the standard treatment without insurance is extraction. And I'm sure that I can quote you a personal example for each cut that is being considered.

Please do not reduce my services. Keep in mind that services that were reduced in 2003 still have not been reinstated and those of us who are forced to live within a very limited income (\$469 SSA plus \$225 SSI plus \$34 food stamps per month!) cannot afford to lose even more, especially in this bad economy. Not even a cost-of-living increase this year – not really the "change" we hoped for.

Thank you all for your kind attention in this matter,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cy Ann Bailey', with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Cy Ann Bailey
403 Speedway Avenue
Missoula, MT 59802-5475
406-239-2435

Nancy Winstead
P.O. Box 246
Florence, MT 59833

August 16, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing with concerns about the cuts to Medicaid optional services, and wage cuts to caregivers. I'm a 56 year -old women with Transverse Myelitis. It has rendered me a quadriplegic restricted to a wheelchair. I'm dependant on Medicaid services i.e. Dental, Physical Therapy, Eyeglasses. and Case Management . Please don't cut these services.

Please don't cut my caregivers pay raise as she works hard for me and deserves a fair wage.

Thank you for your time concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Winstead". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Nancy Winstead

Stacey Hardin
5310 Montgomery Lane
Florence, MT 59833

August 16, 2010

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing with concerns about the cuts to Medicaid optional services, and wage cuts to caregivers.

I am a caregiver to a woman with Transverse Myelitis. She is a quadriplegic in a wheel chair. She is dependent on Medicaid services; i.e. dental, Physical therapy, glasses, and case management. Please don't cut these services.

I am also raising two children on the wages I receive. Please don't cut my pay raise. I don't get vacation or sick time.

Thank you for your time concerning this matter.

Thank you,
Stacey Hardin

August 2, 2010

Dear Members of the Legislative Finance Committee,

I am writing this letter as a case manager for people with physical disabilities, a former caregiver, and a daughter who lost her 48-year-old dad in a nursing home.

It is difficult to pick out one or even a few of the proposed cuts as each will have such a significant impact on vulnerable populations.

Eliminating Assisted Living and Group Home rates-we, as case managers, already struggle with finding housing for some of the individuals we work with. We are already pushing these providers to their maximum. If housing is unavailable then they are forced into nursing home placement or warm springs which is higher cost for the state than if they were to live in a lower care facility.

Reducing the Medicaid Personal Needs Allowance-I cannot believe this is even of discussion. Living on \$50/month is already challenging. It is our job as case managers to help these folks be active in the community and have a fulfilling life. Aside from personal needs they would like to go to a baseball game, swim, go to the movies, attend a concert, etc. \$50/month does not cover what their true needs are.

Freeze Medically Needy Income Level-It is these folks that most have worked hard a good portion of their lives and paid into the system that suffer. They would have been financially better off had they not worked and now receiving SSDI or pensions after suffering from a tragedy or illness. They need the insurance, Medicaid, but in doing so and having such a large spenddown it leaves them with hardly the ability to pay for rent in their own apartment, they are having to find roommates. In this economy how is somebody supposed to live off of \$645? Spenddown is confusing terminology, I encourage you to reach out to some of those who have a spenddown to see how it effects them.

Eliminate Optional Medicaid Services-If this is to take place then what is the plan to help people pay for dental, eyeglasses, PT, Speech, etc?? Many of the folks we serve would chose to go without because they do not have the funds to pay and that would put them at higher risk of nursing home placement which again would cost the state more money.

Eliminate Additional Support of the Community Waiver Services-Again, I encourage you to look at how many individuals are on waiting lists and to visit with some of them. Most people, especially my deceased father, did not want to be housed in a nursing home. When he was able to receive Home and Community Based Services and live in his own home he looked beyond his suffering from ALD and he had hope and did what he could to have a fulfilling life. Remember, there may come a time you are fighting tooth and nail to stay in your own home and that is what this service is all about.

Thank you for your efforts and dedicated work.

Sincerely,



Cris Fleming Bloxom, BSW
cbloxom@communitymed.org
406-360-4809

Dear Members of the Legislative Finance Committee,

I am writing this letter on behalf of my nephew, Dustin Overgaard, his family and all others that your proposed budget options will affect.

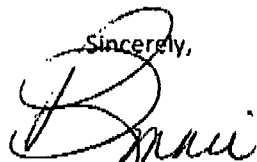
Dustin was injured in a ski accident in February of 1998 and his lifestyle completely changed. The accident occurred at Bridger Bowl in Bozeman where Dustin was skiing for the day with a friend. It was just one of those freak accidents. It left Dustin with a closed head injury, the loss of use of his left side and in a wheelchair. Prior to this accident Dustin was attending college in Bozeman. He was paying for his own college and working to be able to do this. When registered at MSU he paid for the insurance coverage, but in 1998 Dustin was taking a semester off because he needed to work full-time to save up money for tuition. By doing this, when he had his accident he no longer had insurance and thus put Dustin in the situation that he needed state assistance. Dustin was 27 at the time and on his own. His parents are not financially or physically able to care for Dustin.

Rather than give you a ton of statistics or go through the whole boo-hoo routine I would encourage you all to visit your constituents whom the cuts will directly affect and see for yourself. The monies people with disabilities who are at home, in a group home or in a special facility receive are not remotely close to sipping champagne; it is more like rot gut beer.

I noticed there are two state senators on the committee from Missoula; Senator Carol Williams and Senator Dave Wanzonried. I would ask you to go visit Dustin at his apartment and the facility where he goes during the day. Dustin is at the Bridges/Opportunities complex in Missoula. Dustin's apartment, which he shares with another disabled person, is 2075 Cooper Street Apt 413 in Missoula. Take a look around and see if these individuals can afford the reductions that are on your agenda for the August 2nd meeting.

I know Missoula is not the only place with facilities for people with various degrees of disability. With that being said I would encourage all of you on this committee to visit facilities in your area or around the state before making any decision on these proposed reductions. I know times are tough, but sometimes we need to bite the bullet and look at other areas to cut that won't affect those that can't help themselves.

Thank you for your time. Thank you for your service to the State of Montana.

Sincerely,

Bonnie M. Foster

PLEASANT VIEW PERSONAL CARE, INC,

4322 West Central Ave.

Missoula, M T 59804

406-728-8675

Dear Representative,

RE: Legislative Finance Committee Meeting on Monday August 2.

I am writing in regards to the rate reduction for Medicaid Providers. This reduction will make it harder to provide the services and care for the residence. The cost of food, electricity, and other living expenses are continually going up.

The other concern I have is to implement a provider fee. I feel that it will make it harder for Medicaid residents to be accepted into assisted living homes. The company is already paying taxes on the income from Medicaid residents.

I hope you will consider these when you are voting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie Kolden".

Bonnie Kolden, Owner/Manager



July 30, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am employed with Bee Hive Homes Assisted Living Facility of Missoula, and we provide housing for both the elderly, as well as those with traumatic brain injuries. The rate of reimbursement for those residents who utilize the Montana Medicaid Waiver are significantly less than the rates a private pay resident is required to pay. Nevertheless, we accept those on the waiver program as there is a necessity for quality housing options for all people in this community. These residents receive the same level of care, are provided the same amenities, and are able to utilize the same services (transportation, outings, activities) as everyone who resides at this facility. Reducing the funding for this program would significantly affect the number of Medicaid eligible residents that we would be able to accept, primarily due to the already large discrepancy in the reimbursement rate. Our private pay residents see no less than a \$50.00 increase in rent from year to year simply due to the cost of living increases. Please reconsider eliminating these increases in living allowances to those served by our tax dollars through the Medicaid program.

Respectfully,

Erin Heitzmann, Bee Hive Homes, Missoula

9/14/2010

Sheila James
565 Burton St. Apt 305
Missoula, MT 59802

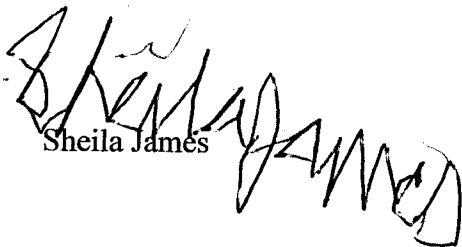
Dear Legislative Finance Committee,

My name is Sheila James. I use Home and Community Based Services to help myself and others live life to the fullest. Using HCBS enables me to interact more effectively in my community. I also use personal care assistants to help me with my hygiene and daily living tasks like bathing and dressing.

I moved into a nursing home when I was 24 years old, and lived there for 10 years. I have been living independently now for over 20 years with the previously described help. Cuts to the Personal Assistance Program will ruin my quality of life, because I will be forced to live in a nursing home for the rest of my life. I am not exaggerating when I tell you that I would rather die than live in a nursing home again.

I implore you to take my story into consideration before you make any cuts to Medicaid Services. Please do not take away my independence. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Sheila James



September 14, 2010

Del Reynolds
P.O. Box 163
430 Cooper Ln.
Hamilton, Mt 59840

Dear Legislative Committee,

I am writing this letter in behalf of Bryan D. Tingle who was in a motorcycle accident, June 6, 1996 in which it left him with a brain injury (TBI). He also has seizures and needs 24 hour care. He was in a nursing home for four years, as I am his Guardian, I had our home made handicapped accessible, and in January 2000 I brought him to our house, where he has lived for 10 years. It was hard for the first eight years. We finally got enough hours so that we could keep a full time caregiver at 40 hours a week and a part time caregiver who gets 30 hours plus they get their insurance, the company they work for is called Progressive Personal Care.

In considering budget cuts, please don't cut the handicapped. After 10 years in our home, I would hate to see Bryan go back to a nursing home. It's a lot cheaper having Bryan in our home, than in the nursing home. If our hours are cut the part time caregivers may lose their insurance and be forced to find another job.

I again urge you, please don't make cuts on the handicapped people who can't have a say in the process.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Del Reynolds".

Del Reynolds, Guardian for
Bryan D. Tingle

To whom it concerns... I am writing this because I hear there are rumors of cuts in many of the programs the concern myself and others who are in need of these programs. I am disabled and I use the services to help me get through life. Without them, who knows where I might be. I know things are tight, but there are many more less needed programs that would not cause misery. I am talking about the services that concern personal care, such as case management and other services like that. I don't really think anyone is getting more than they need... Most are only getting enough to get by with a bare minimum. I myself only take a shower three times a week... How many of you law makers would be willing to do that?? So, I hope you consider this... And I do want you to know, that this is a one issue say that I would be willing to vote on... Thank you very much... Kerry Myers

Ps. I have 5 helpers, and lots of friends who care...

Hi, My name is Gerry. I am 69 year old female with Multiple Sclerosis. When I kept getting weaker and weaker, unable to drive forgetting things, walking was getting more difficult and cooking impossible. Then I got hit with the diagnosis of Multiple Scerosis.

Now I have help. I have a roommate and a Personal Care Attendant I also use a walker and have Copaxzone injections daily without these I would get much worse quicker and faster. They are helping me to maintain.

I have lost so much of my independance that I don't want to lose any- more and going to a nursing home would mean defeat for me. HELP!

Gerry A. Bryner

Sheryl Frank
1092 Meridian Rd.
Victor, MT 59875

September 14, 2010

Dear Legislative Finance Committee,

I am writing this letter because of my concerns of the Budget cuts that you are considering that would affect me.

I am a Certified Nursing Assistant that is now working for Progressive Personal Care and my client is a disabled individual. I have been with him for three years now. With this job I am only part time but because of the hours I do work I qualify for Health Benefits. If my hours were to be cut I would lose this benefit.

I have worked at a Long Term Care Facility and I much prefer to work with individuals in their own homes. The reasons for this are: 1. The client is more comfortable in their own home. 2. You do not feel pulled in many different directions. 3. You are able to meet the needs of the client, because you are there 1:1.

My client is a 36 year old male who at the age of 22 was involved in a terrible motorcycle accident. He suffered multiple injuries, but the main injury was to his brain. This has affected his mobility, speech and his cognitive behaviors. Because of these facts he lives with his guardians who are also his Grandparents. They are elderly and cannot physically do all that is required for his care and need the extra help that I and the other Assistant provide.

In these economic hard times I need a job that provides an income as well as the Health Insurance so that I do not become a burden on the already stretched welfare system. My client needs the assistance with all of his activities of daily living, but because of his age and disabilities I do not feel that a Long Term Care Facility is the right choice for him.

Please consider all that I have said in making your decisions. It has an impact on many lives.

Thank You



Sheryl Frank

September 12, 2010

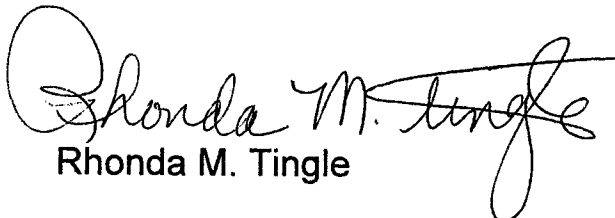
Dear Legislative Finance Committee,

In 1996 Bryan D. Tingle was in a motorcycle accident which left him with a brain injury (TBI).

He was in a couple of nursing homes but because he was only 22 years old he couldn't get the stimulation, etc he needed. I lived in Kalispell, Mt and worked as an LPN. His grandparents fixed their house and made it handicapped accessible. In 2002 I moved next door and worked through Progressive Personal Care to get paid to take care of him. I was disappointed when I first started because the wages were so low - \$8.25. Then another agency paid more through the self help program and the Power of Attorney has finally found Progressive Personal Care who pays the best and has insurance. Through them we finally have enough hours to finally have two people so that the other has a day off. Before, the Power of Attorney had to do it himself.

I would ask please that you reconsider in your budget cuts. Bryan Tingle is also my son, I don't want my son to go to a nursing home and I don't want to be forced to get a second job. Maybe even without insurance. If hours get cut, the second employee would have her hours cut and then she would not have insurance. Also in the past the main employee always had 40 hours while the second employee had the left over hours. In 2002 it was only eight hours. So the main employee, me, didn't get paid for all the help that Bryan needed (24 hours). I again urge you please don't make cuts.

Thanks,


Rhonda M. Tingle

September 13, 2010

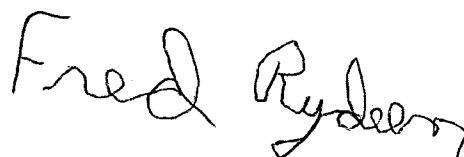
To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Fred Rydeen and I suffered a traumatic brain injury after serving two tours of duty in Vietnam. My traumatic brain injury was the result of a motorcycle accident which nearly killed me. Instead of dying, though, I survived, but as a result of the injuries sustained, I am permanently disabled. I am paralyzed on my right side and have lost most of the vision in my left eye. To function as independently as I can, I need hands on assistance from someone else, and this service is provided to me at the assisted living facility where I have lived for the past several years. Along with assistance in the activities of daily living, (bathing, grooming, hygiene, toileting, dressing) I am provided with full housekeeping, meal preparation, medication management and laundry services. These are things I can no longer manage on my own. If assisted living was not available to me, my only other option would be skilled nursing care in one of our local nursing homes.

Please reconsider the cuts to the organizations that provide these services to myself, as well as the countless others who are unable to live independently in this community.

Thank you for your consideration,

Fred Rydeen, Resident, Bee Hive Homes Assisted Living Facility

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Rydeen". The ink is dark and the signature is written in a fluid, connected style.